



# On the Image of Zoroaster

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## ON THE IMAGE OF ZOROASTER.

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Although the records of Iranian and Classical antiquity abound in references to Zarathustra, there is no indigenous or foreign visual image of the Prophet labelled with his name, or certain to be an intended depiction of him, that is known before the Italian Renaissance. That is not because we lack for visual imagery and iconography in the Zoroastrian tradition in antiquity. The recent discoveries of Sogdian Zoroastrian religious art, from ceramic ossuaries found in Central Asia to monumental nephrite bas-reliefs unearthed at the terminus of the Silk Road in Chang'an, have enriched the iconographic record considerably but have not yielded an identifiable image of the Prophet. It was already long known, before these momentous discoveries, that Armenia had shrines called *bagink'* — this loaned term was shared with various Iranian lands — containing images (in the round, one supposes, rather than in mere relief) of the yazatas. These were influenced in style by Greco-Roman art, as was, indeed, the *Buddharupa* in India. The cyclopean platforms and statues in the round of king Antiochus of Commagene and the Iranian gods at the *hierotherion* of Nemrut Dagh from the first century BC, in southeastern Anatolia, afford a sense of both the artistic style and scale of the Zoroastrian monuments that existed in the Arsacid period before the Christianization of the Armenians and neighboring religiously Iranized peoples. There are also bas-reliefs, there and at nearby Arsameia on the Nymphaeion, where the king or an ancestor is shown shaking hands with a god, for instance, Mithra, or receiving a large ring, sometimes adorned with trailing ribbons, from him. The statues in the round on their throne that face the fire altars at Nemrut Dagh are gigantic; the reliefs that flank the processional ways of the sanctified space are on a much more human scale. (Plates 1, 2, 3, and 4.)

The ring that the god offers kings in the Commagenian and Iranian reliefs is thought to be the sunlike divine glory, Av. *xvarənah* (Phl. *xwarr*, Arm. l-w *p'ark'*, etc.), that is bestowed on just and rightful rulers and taken away from wicked ones. Sometimes it is envisioned as a bird or ram. The symbol of a winged disk surmounted by a man (actually, a man rising from a ring that girdles him) borrowed by the Achaemenians from Urartu and Assyria, ultimately a symbol of the Egyptian Sun-god, ceased to be employed in Iranian art after Alexander, but individual components such as a disembodied pair of wings, or the ring, remained in use. They doubtless signified holiness and dominion, but in the absence of a written contemporary explanation their exact meaning remains disputable. They are not things naturally found on earth, but are representations of realities believed to belong to the *mēnōg*, "spiritual" world. The ring might also, perhaps simultaneously, be symbolic of an object on a mundane and visible level, the diadem (MP. *dīdēm* or *pusag*, Sgd. *'fs'k* /pronounced *əfsēl*/, Arm. l-w *psak*). This was very much part of the *gētīg*, "material", world; so in art it need not be a symbolic representation, but a simple depiction from life. The diadem was tied around the crown at the time of coronation; and I shall adduce medieval Armenian evidence presently that suggests that

this was how the object seems to have been understood more than a millennium later, in the context of another religion, but by artists strikingly close in other ways to the ancient Iranian sculptors. At the ceremony of investiture the king was not fully enthroned until this tying on of the diadem was completed; and in the Arsacid era a noble house held in hereditary perpetuity the office of coronant. In Parthian Iran proper the Sūrēn clan, masters of Sagastān province, were *tājboxš*, “crown-bestowers”; in Armenia only a Bagratuni *naxarar* might be *t’agadir* “coronant”. On the reliefs, the divinity hands the ring to the king, though; he does not slip it over his crowned head. So if it is an investiture scene, it is a symbolic one, and one in which Ahura Mazda, “a spirit even among spirits” as Zoroastrians stress, is visible— so either in a metaphor or in the *mēnōg* world parallel to our own in life or following it, in death. Staying in Commagene for a moment, it is noteworthy that Mithra appears there, several times, with the same tell-tale radiate nimbus behind his head, just as he does over a century before and at the other end of the Iranian world, in Bactria, just as he will on a Sasanian relief at Tāq-e Bostān near Kermanshah, in western Iran. It is a mark that makes it certain an image represents this divinity who embodies many aspects, the light of the Sun among them. This does not mean that Zoroastrian iconography was thoroughly systematic and stable over time; but some of it clearly was. This is important to remember for what will come later.

Another consideration of relevance has to do with the overt setting of all the scenes I have mentioned, except for the Sasanian one: they are funerary. The king meets and greets the divinities, and is seated with them, in the next world. That is reasonable: all Zoroastrians encounter Mithra, Rašnu, and Sraoša after death, at the time of judgment; and the blessed then sup with them, too— the *Haðōxt nask*, which is the Avestan foundation of the famous book of the righteous Vīrāz, describes the process. Sasanian coins name the monarch as one *ke čīhr az yazdān*, “whose seed is from the gods”; and Ammianus Marcellinus has the long-lived, mighty Sapor (Shapur II) introduce himself vaingloriously as *particeps siderum, frater solis ac lunae*. So perhaps the kings might have been thought to see the gods, to whose number they belonged, while they were still alive. In Rome this could be a device employed ironically to ridicule a particularly hubristic emperor: at the full moon, in accordance with his claim to be on equal footing with the gods, Caligula used to invite Luna to his bed. “Did you not see her?” he demanded once of Iulus Vitellius (himself later to become emperor). “No,” replied the latter tactfully, “only you gods can see one another.” The Sasanian relief at Kermanshah to be considered presently, like a similar, earlier one of Ardašīr I at Naqš-e Rostam, is always called an investiture. Ten out of the 28 known Sasanian rock reliefs are, or are presumed to be so. The ancient Iranians and Armenians were sticklers for form— there was a *darandarzbed*, Arm. *handerjapet*— and as his title suggests, he was in charge of matters of protocol at court that included vestments. So, as I suggested above, the scene of a god handing the ring of glory or diadem of legitimacy (or whatever it was) to the king might have been a symbolic representation, or even a parallel ceremony in the *mēnōg* or spiritual world, of what was going on down in the *gētīg*, or material one, at coronation time. In Arsacid Armenia the only way a noble Parthian became king was for the *t’agadir*, “coronant”— this was a hereditary office of the Bagratuni clan and nobody else could do it— to tie the diadem around the crown. Sasanian ceremony may have differed, even considerably; but to be certain we deal in fact with the royal investiture it

might be helpful to see a throne, a coronant, and so on. But we don't: the newly minted monarch meets the god Ahura Mazda on foot or horseback. Ardašīr's steed tramples the fallen Ardavān; Ohrmazd's, a humanoid with gorgon locks generally taken to be Ahreman, who the *Bundahišn* tells us is in abasement in hell (which must be very far down). (Plate 5.) This visual shorthand, with its roots in Assyrian art, became standard for Sasanian triumphal propaganda. Armenian preserves an ekphrastic epithet, a word crystallized in amber from Parthian days, for the particular humiliation to which these defeated foes are subjected: *smbakakox*, "trampled underfoot by hooves". Could this not have been intended as a scene of the just king's welcome into the next world, rather than as a rite of investiture? That is another point to keep in mind, as we explore the subsequent artistic record.

So far, then, we have portrayals in Iranian art of both men and gods, and at least one of the latter, Mithra, looks much the same wherever we find him, suggesting that the viewer was expected to recognize him without the help of an inscribed caption (such as the multi-lingual one identifying Ohrmazd at Naqš-e Rostam, for instance). The Sasanians seem to have removed from the *bagin*-temples and maybe destroyed statues in the round of yazatas in the course of their reforms upon coming to power. But they felt no hesitation in portraying divine and supernatural beings—Ohrmazd, the goddess Anāhitā, the *daēnā* (the embodiment of one's spiritual virtue, whom one meets on the bridge into heaven after death or in a vision of the afterlife). But nobody labeled as Zoroaster is identifiably portrayed anywhere; and indeed no Achaemenian, Parthian Arsacid, or Sasanian official inscription mentions the Prophet by name. That is not because they were not Zoroastrians (of course they were) or because they had any compunction about mentioning the Prophet (they did not). The most we can surmise from silence is that the context simply did not call for it. Though the reciter of the Zoroastrian credo, the Frāvarānē, identifies himself in Avestan as *zaraθuštriš*, and the Prophet's name is attested in pre-Islamic Iran in widely varying local forms—Sogdian *zrušč*, for instance—that may attest to local *zands* as well (on this more presently), the only name given to the Good Religion in inscriptions is "Mazda-worship". Fifth-century Armenian sources call it *deni mazdezn*, too, using an Arsacid pronunciation of the name. This is not surprising or distressing: Christ in name and image pervades Christendom, but that is because He is God and His life is divine epiphany. The founders of other faiths are men, and images of them are not *de rigueur*. Muslims do not call themselves Mohammedans; Jews are not Mosaic. Zarathustra brought the Good Religion but was not a divine being or an immortal; nor was he a political leader. He was the greatest of men.

Still, there is one ancient portrait painting, more precisely, one of a pair, which, in the opinion of some scholars, was intended to depict Zoroaster, although there is no inscription identifying the figure and the suggestion is purely a hypothesis. But it is a hypothesis that I want to argue is at least not an unfounded or audacious one, since several generations have deprecated it. The fresco was found in the Mithraeum of Dura Europos and dates to the early third century AD—that is, to a time shortly before the destruction of the city by the forces of Shapur I. (Plates 6 and 7.) Dura (this is its old Aramaic name, just meaning a fort; Europos was a Macedonian add-on) was a walled fortress-city on the Euphrates frontier (not far from modern Deir al-Zor) of the Roman

Empire with the Parthians and, later, the Sasanians. The population was heterogeneous: Jews, Christians, Greco-Roman pagans, worshippers of sundry local Syrian gods, polyglottic speakers of Parthian, Persian, Aramaic, Arabic, Greek, and Latin. The Mithraeum was dedicated, obviously, to an Iranian deity, in a region steeped in Iranian Zoroastrian culture and tradition on two sides, not-yet-Christian Arsacid Armenia to the north and Parthian Iran to the east; so it makes sense that there is a much stronger religiously Iranian flavor to the art than one finds in Mithraic temples in Rome, or in the City of London or in the recesses of Hadrian's Wall for that matter. For instance, there is a fresco decoration on the arch over the portraits and cult niche, and contemporary with the portraits, of alternating fire altars and cypresses that we do not find anywhere else in Mithraic art. (Plate 8) But the fire particularly sacred to the Parthians, that of Burzēn Mihr "Mithra the Lofty", was enthroned in Khorasan, near the great cypress of Kišmar. So the repetition of the two juxtaposed images in the shrine of a god adopted from the Iranians, across the river from Parthia, seems more than a random coincidence. The temple went through stages of repair as with Mithraea elsewhere, except that, unlike the builders working on the Londinium temple, the Mithraists of Dura did not have to deal with rising damp. The edifice began as the modest wing of a house, was enlarged, and finally took the form of a basilica rather than the standard *spelaeum* ("cave"). The founder was a local Syrian legionary, that is, a soldier of Rome: 'Ethpeni the *strategos*, son of Zabde'a the chief of the archers of Dura. But it is quite certain the rich frescoes were not painted by soldiers but by professional artists. The style is the same as that of the Synagogue of the town; and for all we know both sanctuaries were decorated by the same contractors.

Large portraits of two men in white sacerdotal garb flank the cult niche with the carven tauroctony scene. They stare straight ahead, hold slender ebony staffs and are seated on fine carven armchairs. Franz Cumont, the pioneer of Mithraic studies, wrote confidently in the excavation report co-authored with Mikhail Rostovtzeff, pioneer of the study of Parthian art, "There is no doubt... that the persons represented in the paintings of Dura must be regarded as the *magi*, or prophets, those who were the authors or the interpreters of the several books (*logoi hieroi*) of Mithraism. Since Zoroaster was regarded as the originator of the Mithraic mysteries and Osthane was his most famous pupil, we may speculate that the two *magi* of Dura are to be identified with those two great Iranian prophets."<sup>1</sup> Recent scholarship has tended to dismiss this hypothesis and more cautiously to propose that the portraits are not of Zoroaster and another Iranian magus at all, but of prominent donors to the temple in the garb of the local Palmyrene pagan clergy,<sup>2</sup> so we may be looking at Ethpeni, the fairly remote founder, dressed up for lodge night, or one of his wealthy successors, but not Zoroaster. One might counter that Palmyrene, Hatrene, and Edessene pagan priests all looked a lot like Parthian ones, since Iran set the fashion. (It has been argued that even the *mikhnasayim* "trousers" worn by the *kohanim* of the Temple of Jerusalem were an innovation from Persia.) One might object

<sup>1</sup> See F. Cumont and M.I. Rostovtzeff, *The Mithraeum*, in M.I. Rostovtzeff, P.E. Brown, and C.B. Welles, *The Excavations of Dura-Europos (Preliminary Report for 1933-34 and 1934-36)*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939, pp. 62-134.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol. 3, Leiden: Brill, 1991, p. 489.

also that a relief in the temple depicts donors quite differently accoutered like the Roman soldiers they were and names them as Zenobios, Iariboles, and Barnaadath— Syrians all. And if the men in the two frescoes were brethren of the Mithraic lodge, then why not name them, with the usual epithets *nama*, *renatus*, and so on? It has been said of modern American Jews that we have an edifice complex (sic!), which involves not just building too many synagogues but putting a plaque naming a donor on every pew, water fountain, and doorknob. The Mithraists suffered from an earlier form of the same malady. But the portraits stand, noble, uncaptioned— presumably everybody who saw them in antiquity was supposed to *know* whom they represented. A photograph of 1932 (Plate 9) shows two more recent sages, Franz Cumont and Mikhail Ivanovich, in the hieratic garb of the European savant, in front of the newly-excavated frescoes and cult niche. (Rostovtzeff got the Mithraeum for Yale, where it is now safe and sound.) One might compare either of the Dura figures to a portrait, probably taken from life or very nearly so, in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi in the Echmiadzin Gospel (Erevan Matenadaran 2374; Plate 10). The miniature was done most likely in the Sasanian period, and was bound into the manuscript, which is itself dated to AD 989, when Zoroastrians were still very visible in Iran and surrounding lands in any case and an Armenian viewer would still have no trouble identifying their Magi. The magus of the Armenian manuscript has richly colored clothes; but he is a traveler, a wealthy and powerful guest showering riches on the Son of God. The similarly attired priest from Dura is in white— but he, like an officiating *mobed* or *dastur* in gleaming white vestments in an *agiary*, is in a temple after all.

Let us suppose the two figures were intended to be magi. What are their ebony canes for? “Median diviners also divine with rods,” declare the *Scholia in Nicandri Theriaca* (613, with reference to Dino); and Albert de Jong, commenting on the Classical sources, notes that these staffs might have been confused at time with the long, thin bundle of the *barsom*— the ritual fasces held by a magus on a gold plaque from the Oxus treasure, and wielded by Ohrmazd and Mithra on the Sasanian rock reliefs. The Dura figures grasp tightly furled scrolls, too, in their left hands. Mani, a contemporary of the paintings and a Parthian, who modestly advertised himself as the seal of the prophecies of Christ, the Buddha, and Zoroaster, *in manu validissimum baculum tenebat ex ligno ebenino, Babylonii vero librum portabat sub ala sinistra*, according to the *Acta Archelai*— that is, he held an ebony staff in his right hand and had a book tucked under his left arm. His book might have been a fashionably novel codex, but the iconographic shorthand for “book” was still a scroll (we still use the Latin word *volumen*, too). In the Classical world Zoroaster, thanks to the resemblance of part of his name to Greek *astēr*, “star”, was regarded in the main as the inventor of astrology and the author of many books, voluminous ones, on the subject. This accorded with the general association of the Magi with divinatory and other occult sciences. They gave their name to our word “magic” after all. But Zoroaster had another, more venerable image. The Zathraustes of Diodorus Siculus (1.94.2) was pre-eminently a *nomothetēs*, a lawgiver. He had received the laws from the *agathos daimōn* “good spirit” (or *epitykhes noēma*, “fortunate mind” of the *Greater Alcibiades* 1.122A), that is, the Aməša Spənta Vohu Manah. So it is proper that the putative magus at Dura grip a *volumen* as well as a staff— a book as well as a magician’s wand.

As for the other figure, whom Cumont took to be Ostanes, Diogenes Laertius, citing the *Lydian History* of Xanthus, states that "... six thousand years passed from the time of Zoroaster up to the crossing of Xerxes, and that after him there had been many Magi in succession, Ostanes, Astrampsychus, Gobryas and Pazatas, until the conquest of the Persians by Alexander."<sup>3</sup> Ostanes is elsewhere hailed as the greatest of the magi, king of the harp, and discoverer of the proper invocations of the seven planetary divinities. He wrote mainly on magic and alchemy; Zoroaster, on astrology. Lactantius Placidus, a scholiast on the poet Statius, writes, "Ostanes reports that among the Persians the sun is called by the proper name Mithra," which is true, if not particularly esoteric, information; and various books are attributed to him, of which only one is named, by Philo of Byblos: the *Octateuch*, which deals with the qualities of the supreme deity.<sup>4</sup> As for the name, Ferdinand Justi offers no etymology (s.v. Austanes) but cites an Armenian Ostan: this would be the form closest to a hypothetical Iranian one. This is a weak link, though: the latter word, certainly an Iranian loan, means "royal palace" and exists in Classical and later Armenian usage and toponymy, but is found as a proper name only once, in a colophon of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. There is a proper name Vostanik, with the on-glide before initial O and the diminutive suffix of Armenian, which is in its way famous indeed, as the given name of a boy from Van who later became an abstract expressionist painter and was known to the world as Arshile Gorky. But this is a modern name, derived from the name of the ancient royal town of Vostan near Gorky's birthplace, the little village of Khorgom.<sup>5</sup> There are no Iranian references to a person named \*Ostan; so even if Zoroaster is depicted at Dura, and there is no real reason why he should not have been, Ostanes is a figure who on present evidence existed in Classical sources, might or might not have belonged to Mithraic tradition (for which we have no books, only some inscriptions, Latin hexameters, and maybe one page of the ritual for the fourth degree), and is unknown to Zoroastrian tradition. Why should Zoroaster be depicted together with anybody else in the first place? He had a royal patron, Vīštāspa, to whom speaks directly in the *Gathas*, and the latter's sagely advisor at court, Jāmāspa, is a hero of the faith. Some Parsi devotional pictures show the Prophet and another person, generally identified as the Kayanian hero Lohrāsp, with a blazing fire on its altar between them. This scene may have been inspired by the obverse of Sasanian coins, though, where armed warriors flank a sacred fire, and reinterpreted in a ritual sense, in which case the Prophet would perhaps be the officiating priest of the Yasna ceremony, the *zōt* (who holds the *barsom*); and his counterpart, the *rāspī*. The Ahuna Vairya prayer, which, as we shall see presently, Zarathustra wielded with such great power, itself probably refers to his own pastoral and soteriological role and mission. It extols righteous holders of spiritual and temporal authority, the *ahu* and *ratu*; so a dual portrait, with its aesthetic symmetry, might also suggest this balance of powers.

<sup>3</sup> Albert de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature*, Leiden: Brill, 1997, pp. 322, 392, 398-399.

<sup>4</sup> Boyce, *op. cit.*, pp. 493, 555-558.

<sup>5</sup> H. Ačārean, *Hayoc' anjanunneri bararan* ["Dictionary of Armenian proper names"], Beirut: Sevan, 1972, vol. 4, p. 193.

The paintings at the temple to Mithra at Dura, then, may or may not include a portrayal of the Iranian prophet as the devotees of the most iconographically stable and familiar of the yazatas, Mithra(s), imagined him. Their contemporaries in the Greco-Roman world thought of Zoroaster as an astrologer, but also as a great lawgiver. What about the people dwelling on the far side of the Euphrates frontier, in the lands where his faith was known and practiced? Two centuries after the destruction of Dura-Europos, and about 125 years or so after the baptism of the Armenian Arsacids, the historian and clergyman Elišē (Elisaeus) *vardapet* mentions *mecn Zradeštn*, “the great Zradešt” and the *awrēns zradaštakan*, “Zoroastrian laws”, in his chronicle of the Armeno-Sasanian war of AD 449-451. This was the conflict, culminating in the Battle of Avarayr, in which forces under the commander in chief St. Vardan Mamikonean resisted the attempt of the Sasanian Yazdagerd II and his prime minister Mihrnarseh to reimpose Zoroastrianism upon the recently Christianized Armenian nation. Elišē was an eyewitness to these events, and although there is much rhetorical elaboration in his rendering of events, the text of his *History* is rich in contemporary information about Persian Zoroastrian beliefs and practices, and the letters and rescripts are paraphrases true to the style of the originals, maybe even translations of documents. And the vocabulary of the official formulae, the words that describe the Persian religion, most often do not even require translation, since Armenian was and is steeped in Middle Iranian loans, not least in the area of religion. Several MSS of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries offer fascinating marginal glosses of the name of the Iranian prophet, given also in the form *Zradešn*, as *karewor uxt* “mighty (or, significant) covenant” or *bun bank* “fundamental words”. It is impossible to tell how old these two explanations are, but three of the four terms used in them are, not unexpectedly, Iranian loans themselves, and *uxt*, “covenant”, literally “something spoken” probably either interprets the element *dešn* as *dašn*, an Iranian l-w meaning “covenant”, or else echoes the Mlr. form *Zarduxšt*, whose intrusive *x* would suggest such an interpretation. (The *dašn* word is still a household one in *Dašnak*, the colloquial designation for a member of one of the nation’s pre-eminent political parties, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, *Hay hetap’oxakan dašnakc’ut’iwn*.) The first element of the name of Zoroaster, *Zra-*, might have been understood as deriving from *zawr*, “power” (also an Iranian loan in Armenian). It is a theologically good, if philologically inaccurate, understanding of the Prophet’s name, which contains in fact *uštra-*, “camel”, just as the names of most of his family and contemporaries have to do with the domestic animals so valued by the pastoral, nomadic society of the most ancient Iranians.<sup>6</sup>

But the understanding of *Zradešt*, *Zradešn*, or *Zarduxšt* as “mighty covenant” is consonant with native beliefs about the Prophet. For the structure and content of Zarathustra’s revelation is pre-eminently connected, not to miracles such as healing the sick or raising the dead, but to the new doctrine he preached in his hymns, to the words themselves of those hymns, and to their mental and physical power. He was a priest and

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<sup>6</sup> J.R. Russell, “The Name of Zoroaster in Armenian,” *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 2, 1985-1986, pp. 3-10, repr. in J.R. Russell, *Armenian and Iranian Studies* [=AIS], Cambridge, MA: Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 9, 2004, pp. 57-64.



*maqθran*, one who wove together and recited audible ritual formulas of power and truth, mantras— the Avesta is one entire *maqθra spənta*. The mountain where the Prophet's colloquies with Ahura Mazda took place is called after them the *spəntō frašnā*, "sacred questionings". The Zoroastrian credo in Yasna 12 to which one referred above draws its authority from the doctrines and revelations given "in all the questionings, all the meetings at which Zarathustra and Ahura Mazda conferred together" (*vīspaēšu frašnaēšu, vīspaēšu hanjamanaēsu, yāiš āpərəsaētəm Mazdāscā Zaratuštrasčā*). The great Iranists of the twentieth century took up anew the study of Zarathustra's hymns, in the decades after Henning had decried the disintegration of Avestic studies; and in the main their work has shown, through judicious use of the comparative method and relation of the *Gathas* to Vedic, Hellenic, and Celtic poetry, how these foundational texts of Zoroastrianism can be understood as very sophisticated religious poems. My friend and teacher Prof. Martin Schwartz in particular has demonstrated in his groundbreaking studies how the *Gathas* themselves are intricately composed words, vast symmetrical structures and encodings; and often, I would add, they are themselves about the spiritual, mental, and physical power of words, poetry upon poetry. Schwartz's insights in many respects are founded in those of Saussure's studies of what the great French Swiss linguist called the hypograms of Latin poetry. These patterns are not products of the fertile imagination of modern savants, but are the bones and sinews of ancient poetics.<sup>7</sup> In Yasna 28.5 the Prophet declares he will by great pronouncement ward off harmful creatures. In Yasna 31.1 he pronounces "speech never heard [hitherto]". My colleague Prof. P.O. Skjaervo, in his illuminating studies of the epic substructure of the Avesta, has justifiably and insightfully compared to Homeric feats of brute strength the episode in the *Vīdēvdāt* in which the Prophet casts two stones, each the size of the house, at the Destructive Spirit; and the structure, themes, and language of oral heroic epic indeed suffuse the Avestan corpus. The great Russian Iranist and scholar of the *Gathas* Ivan Mikhailovich Steblin-Kamensky notes rightly, though, that the use of this image may be a metaphor: in Yašt 17.20, the Destructive Spirit complains that the Prophet is assaulting him with the Ahuna Vairya prayer, "fighting as though with a stone the size of a house".<sup>8</sup> The great spiritual war of Zoroastrian dualism is of course between cosmos and chaos, as in Greek conceptions of physics and cosmology; but *Aša* and *Druj* have a moral dimension and semantic distinction beyond this. They are Truth/Righteousness and the Lie. It is by spirit and word, not by mere brute strength, that the Prophet fought evil; and his words were and are deeds.<sup>9</sup> If, then, an ancient Mithraic artist were to attempt to

<sup>7</sup> Ancient Armenian poetry seems to encode the name of the Zoroastrian yazata Vahagn (Av. Vərəθrayna) into a hymn dedicated to him and into related mythological texts, for instance. See J.R. Russell, "Magic Mountains, Milky Seas, Dragon Slayers, and Other Zoroastrian Archetypes," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* N.S. 22, Ann Arbor, MI, 2008 [2012], pp. 57-80. On these features of Saussure's poetics see most recently Daniel Heller-Roazen, *Dark Tongues: The Art of Rogues and Riddlers*, New York: Zone, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> I.V. Steblin-Kamenskii, *Gaty Zaratushty*, St. Petersburg: Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie, 2009. I am grateful to Dr. Firuza Abdullaeva for her gift of her copy of this precious volume.

<sup>9</sup> William Blake, an angry Biblical exegete, insisted that words are deeds, and Christ's power was nothing to Caesar's if it is not so; W.H. Auden, in his elegy for Yeats, mused:

portray Zoroaster, he might well dress him in Persian priestly garb and place a staff in one hand and the scroll of the lawgiver, the prophet, the sage, in the other, as at Dura. He is the bringer of the powerful covenant.

And we find a parallel to that Armenian gloss at the other end of the Zoroastrian world, in India— suggesting, perhaps, a common exegetical strand, or *zand*, in both regions. In her discussion of the depiction of Mithra on the bas-relief of Tāq-e Bostān, to which we will turn presently in greater detail, Martha Carter suggests that the great yazata is shown standing on a lotus flower because the symbol was used to signify a contemporary political connection of the Sasanians with the Kushans.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps so, for in the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Bundahišn* it is the goddess of the waters Ābān who is associated particularly with the lotus (Phl. *nīlōpal*), while Mihr presides over all flowering plants (*wiškōfagān*) generally. The lotus is rare in Iranian art but it was in the Subcontinent and in regions influenced by its iconography so potent and universally recognized a marker of sanctity that Christians in western China were to make of it the base of the Cross in carvings, even as the Armenians co-opted the Sasanian symbol of twin wings, to support the Holy Sign on their own early Christian monuments. So a lotus on a Sasanian relief may have political overtones. Carter discusses briefly in conjunction with her theory the famous *magavans*— Zoroastrians of the region of Sind. According to the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (139.44) the *magas* were descended from a sage of the Mihira clan in Śakadvīpa, literally the Island of the Sakas/Scythians— that is, from an Iranian noble family such as the Mihrānids, from Sagastān/Sistān. The daughter of the sage, the legend continues, married the Sun god (this would be the Indian Sūrya). Their son, founder of the Maga sect, was named Jaraśabda, i.e., Zarathustra. The association with the sun and light would accord with the Zoroastrian tradition, found in the seventh book of the *Dēnkard* and elsewhere, that the home of the parents of the Prophet blazed with light before his birth. Classical and Iranian tradition together affirm that he laughed at birth, and the *Zardušt-nāme* brings together the two details: *Be-xandīd čūn šud ze mādar jodā; / Darraxšān šud az xande-ye ū sarā*, “He laughed as he left his mother’s womb/ And from his laughter shone the room.” As to the Prophet’s name in this Puranic tradition, Jaraśabda, it seems an arbitrary, deliberate kind of form. One can render Zarathustra in various ways in Indic languages, Parsi Gujarati Jarthošt for example; so perhaps making Indic *śabda*, “word”, the second part of the Prophet’s name was translation from an Iranian form where the same was perceived, whether it contained something like *uxt* “speech” or *dašn* “covenant”. That is what apparently produced the Armenian gloss. Given the importance of the identification of Zarathustra as a lawgiver, the parallel may not have been fortuitous, but reflected instead a widespread exegetical tradition. The manuscripts containing the Armenian gloss are very late, copied a full millennium after Efišē wrote

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“For poetry makes nothing happen: it survives/ In the valley of its making where executives/ Would never want to tamper/ flows on.../... it survives/ A way of happening, a mouth.” Then Wm. S. Burroughs declared, “The purpose of writing is to make it happen.”

<sup>10</sup> Martha L. Carter, “Mithra on the Lotus: A study of the imagery of the sun god in the Kushano-Sasanian era,” *Monumentum Georg Morgenstierne I (Acta Iranica 21)*, Leiden: Brill, 1981, pp. 74-98.

his history of Vardan, but so indeed is the entire Zoroastrian manuscript tradition itself, and so is that of India. The conservatism of Armenian tradition and its long and intimate acquaintance with Iran and Zoroastrianism speak in favor of an authentically old exegetical line, yet coincidence and late invention are also possible.

So we may have a tradition in which Zoroaster was regarded mainly as the bringer of a powerful covenant. A furred scroll could have signified such a covenant to Zoroastrians of the late Parthian Arsacid period, to which the Zoroastrian Pahlavi books assign the first attempts to codify the Avestan corpus in writing. One sacerdotal figure in the Mithraeum of Dura-Europos, then, could be Zarathustra; the other, either the Ostanes of Classical legend or perhaps the sage Jamaspa of native Iranian tradition. One does not insist that Cumont and Rostovtzeff were right in their identification; but they were not necessarily wrong. Palmyrene priests? Donors? It ain't necessarily so...

Let us now consider the relief of Mithra at Tāq-e Bostān, from the late fourth century. (Plate 11.) It belongs to a complex of reliefs on the cliff face and in rock-cut vaults near a spring emptying into a pool, in the Zagros highlands near Kermanshah, on the old Baghdad-Khorasan road. It would have been, thus, a pleasant rest stop and place of pilgrimage and veneration for travelers in antiquity. There is no problem of identification of Mithra himself, even though the scene as a whole lends itself to various interpretations. The basic iconography of the god, as we have already noted, is widespread and stable as that of no other in the pantheon; and he appears in Sasanian Iran too, on a coin of Hormizd I in the late third century, that is, about a hundred years before this rock relief. The yazata is behind a king who is receiving the beribboned ring from Ahura Mazda, and extends the *barsom*. Mithra stands on a lotus; the king and the supreme God, on the extended, prostrate corpse of a bearded Roman emperor. The latter can be none other than the fourth-century Julian the Apostate, whom Shapur II defeated; but there has been much debate about the identity of the king treading upon him. Some scholars<sup>11</sup> identify him as Ardašīr II, who reigned for four years after Shapur and could scarcely have killed poor Julian a second time, so if it is indeed he, then the victory over the powerful enemy is meant somehow to accrue to his benefit, as a good deed of his predecessor— probably also a close relative— whose merit he is meant to inherit. Carter would have the lotus signify the success of Sasanian policy in eastern regions. Poor dead, defeated Julian had gone on campaign proclaiming the protection of Sol-Mithras, so showing Mithra himself blessing the Sasanian who crushed the audacious Roman aggressor has been seen as a propagandistic retort; and indeed this is the only ancient Iranian use of Mithra in a scene legitimating royal power.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> For instance, K. Tanabe, "Date and significance of the so-called investiture of Ardashir II," *Orient* 21, Tokyo, 1985, pp. 102-121. On the other monuments at the site, see Johanna Domela Movassat, *The Large Vault at Taq-i Bostan: A Study in Late Sasanian Royal Art*, Lewiston, VT: Edwin Mellen, 2005. She considers the scene with Mithra to represent the triumph of Shapur II over Julian.

<sup>12</sup> See Dominique Hollard, "Julien et Mithrā [*sic!*] sur le relief de Tāq-i Bostān," *Sources for the History of Sasanian and post-Sasanian Iran, Res Orientales* 19, 2010, pp. 147-163. The scene is discussed also by Barbara Kaim, "Investiture or Mithra: towards a new

It is a striking sculpture; and serves as the basis for most modern Parsi depictions of the Prophet Zarathustra. (Plate 12.) There are thirteen rays on the nimbus at Tāq-e Bostān; in Parsi depictions there are eleven or twelve, perhaps because the Western Christian superstition about thirteen as an unlucky number had entered Parsi consciousness. The Prophet holds the *barsom*, or a knobby stick, or a flaming torch, or a cow-headed mace, or is shown as an *imago clipeata*. (Plates 13, 14, 15, 16). A priest in the course of ordination sleeps with a mace under his pillow; and it hangs with a sword in the fire temple to signify the battle against evil. The Sasanian Mithra has a low-cut, heavily embroidered collar that shows off his powerful shoulders; the Parsi Zarathustra's white shirt comes up to his neck, like that of an officiating priest. There is an image of Zarathustra that was frequently used a century ago but is now rare, that portrays him holding a bow and standing in the open country before a fire altar (Plate 17), while a stylized winged figure hovers in the sky facing him: this is a composite of images drawn from Iranian architectural finds, filtered through the techniques of modern Western art. Other recent Parsi depictions of Zarathustra show him in simple, priestly garb, as on a medal to be worn by a believer (Plate 18); and he is always, in all Zoroastrian art, bearded. (So is Mithra at Tāq-e Bostān and so are the figures in the frescoes of the Dura Mithraeum.) And there are portrayals of the Prophet, as noted earlier, with another figure. (Plates 19, 20.) The obvious questions are the ones I cannot confidently answer, though there may be documentation that I have simply been unable to find. Were the early Parsi artists aware that the figure that served as their model for Zarathustra was Mithra; and if so, why did they choose him? Mithra embodies the covenant; and one tradition, possibly widespread, finds a word for the covenant in the Prophet's name. Zarathustra was the perfect man, the *teleios anthrōpos*; and Mithra is the most human of the yazatas — a quality that figured, most likely, in the evolution of the soteriological religious fraternity of the Mithraists. Mithra is a yazata also associated very closely with the sun; and the Parsis in Gujarat adopted a local symbol of the Hindu sun god Sūrya — the sun rising (or, if one is in western India, setting) over the sea as an emblem of their own faith. So a picture recognized as that of Mithra might have been co-opted as an icon of Zarathustra.

We know at least that Zoroastrians in the early modern period, before any encounter with Western archaeological and philological research, preserved an image of Mithra that seems very much like the standard iconographical type: in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Dastur Anushirvan Marzban of Kerman beheld in a dream the yazata Mihr with a luminous face. The vision is described in Persian verse in a responsum: *Be-man guft Dastūr Nūštrvān, ke īn rāz-e penhān tu nīk ō badān./ Šabī būdam aknūn čū xufte be-xwāb/ Dīdam yekī čihre čūn āftāb./ Be-bū-yeš damīdī čū mošk ō golāb./ Xajal gašt 'ambar bad-ān bū-ye nāb./ Zabān bar gošādām be-goftam ū-rā./ Kadāmī tō bar gūy nām-at be-mā./ Be-goftā man-am Mihrīzed, be-dān./ Ke az lof ō farmān-e ān ghaybdān/ Negāhdār hastam hame-ye band-ha./ Be gītī ō mīnō man-am rahnemā./ Šekast āvordam*

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interpretation of so-called investiture scenes in Parthian and Sasanian art,” *Iranica Antiqua* 44, 2009, pp. 403-415, who takes the image of the god to represent the covenant itself rather than the divine being. She suggests the ring being proffered to the king by the god on various reliefs be identified as a *dydymy*, “diadem” (p. 406).

*kār-e ahremanī, / Be-dīvān ō šaytān konam došmanī...* “Dastur Nushirvan told me, ‘This is a secret hidden amongst the good and bad alike. Now, one night as I was deep in slumber, I beheld one whose face was like the Sun, from whom wafted the fragrance of musk and rose water; languorous was that ambergris perfume. I opened my mouth and spoke to him: Who are you? Tell me your name. He said: Know that I am the god Mithra, who by the gracious command of the Knower of the Hidden am the keeper of all covenants. I am the guide in the material and spiritual worlds. I shattered the works of Ahreman; I work enmity against the demons and Satan...’”<sup>13</sup>

Between the Mithra of Sasanian and earlier ages, whose appearance seems to have been remembered in indigenous tradition, and the appropriation in modern Zoroastrian art of that image for the portrayal of the Prophet Zarathustra, lies the entire era of the growth of the Western tradition, in which Zoroaster was at first but dimly remembered. Gemistos Plethon revived the Classical image of the Persian astrologer-image for the Italian Renaissance; and Raphael portrayed Zoroaster among the great philosophers of antiquity in his “School of Athens”, painted in the Stanza della Segnatura of the Vatican for Pope Julius II (1503-1513). (Plate 21.) He is shown with Ptolemy and Euclid, but opinion seems to be divided, though, about which figure represents him. Vasari identifies him as “Zoroastre, Re de’ Battriani”, King of the Bactrians; so he may be the man in the radiate royal crown (not unlike Mithra’s nimbus) with his back turned to us. This figure holds a terrestrial globe and there are tiny pseudo-Oriental characters on the hem of his golden mantle. (Plate 22.) But if the star-studded globe represents Zoroaster’s profession of astrology, then he is the sage in white facing the crowned figure and the viewer, with Raphael hovering nearby.<sup>14</sup>

Raphael had several precursors, the most prominent of whom was Giusto de Padova (d. ca. 1397), who painted a fresco on the right wall of the Capella di’ Sant’ Agostino of the Eremitani of the philosophers of antiquity seated beneath the figures embodying their particular arts and sciences. A German traveller a century later described the painting and it was also copied in a contemporary manuscript. The latter shows Zoroaster seated below a figure embodying Dialectic (*Dialectica*), who holds a serpent in each hand. (Plate 23.) Zoroaster’s identification as a dialectician would have been based on the grounds of his dualistic philosophy. The other non-Christian prophet of such contemporary schemata of arts and virtues paired with their human proponents or

<sup>13</sup> *Hekāyat andar xwāb dīdan-e Dastūr Anūšīrvān Marzbān-e Mihr yazad-rā va haqīqat-hā-ye ān mīgūyad* [“A story which tells of the vision of Dastur Anushirvan Marzban of the god Mithra in a dream and of its truths”], published in M.R. Unvala, *Darab Hormazyār’s Rivāyat*, Bombay, 1922, Vol. II, pp. 206-207, discussed by J.R. Russell, “‘Sleep’ and ‘Dreaming’ in Armenian,” J. Greppin, ed., *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Armenian Linguistics*, Delmar, NY: Caravan, 1992, pp. 155-156 (repr. in J.R. Russell, *Armenian and Iranian Studies*, Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 9, Cambridge, MA: 2004, pp. 485-486).

<sup>14</sup> See Marcia Hall, ed., *Raphael’s “School of Athens”*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 53; and Arnold Nesselrath, *Raphael’s School of Athens*, The Vatican, 1996, p. 17.

opposites is Mohammed. But his dualism is of another sort: in the *Inferno* of Dante the Arab tears himself down the middle as punishment for having rent in twain the body of the Church; and he is the human antithesis of *Fides*, "Faith". Dialectic is lodged between the two other subjects of the mediaeval curriculum of studies called the *trivium*, *Gramatica* and *Retorica*. The Prophet's name is given in the rather garbled form Cereastes, and he is clothed in a rose-colored hood, with yellow undergarments and a blue and red mantle. He is writing unintelligible characters on a page he holds at right angles to himself. Karl Dannenfeldt describes these as "undoubtedly intended for oriental script."<sup>15</sup> Although most of the other philosophers in the scene are also scribbling away at books, I think they are an argument for identifying the crowned figure with his back to us and a line of Oriental-style writing on his mantle in "The School of Athens" as Zoroaster, even though the figure in Raphael's painting holds a terrestrial globe rather than the expected celestial one. At Padua it is Ptolemy, not "Cereastes"/Zoroaster, who is the proponent of astrology; so Raphael a century later might have made the same identification, and we need not force upon Zoroaster the star-studded globe or the profession of astrology either.<sup>16</sup>

In conclusion, a few reflections. After defending a thesis on Zoroastrianism in Armenia at the School of Oriental and African Studies, I taught Ancient Iranian languages and religions at Columbia University for ten years. When that subject was deleted from the curriculum in favor of Moslem Iran, I had the good fortune to move to Harvard, and have served two decades as professor of Armenian. The fate that befell Iranica at Columbia has now stricken Cambridge as well; so although I teach ancient Iranian now in addition to my regular duties, and will continue to do so as long as God gives health and strength, there is no longer a position in the subject. And at SOAS, a short-lived program in Classical Armenian has just been eliminated; so the text of Eḫšē, for instance, can no longer be studied in London. Much is made of the need to protect the environment and to curb the diminution of species, whose diversity is an ecological necessity and whose destruction by human agency is a moral wrong. The same may be said of languages, which are disappearing at a rate proportional to the extinction of plants and animals. The Zoroastrians are a small people, defined not by land or language or even cultural unity, but by a common devotion to a unique conception of the cosmos and its meaning, radically and irreconcilably different from any other, that was in antiquity of extreme power and influence. This revelatory conception belonged to a single man, whose elusive image I have pursued here, across millennia, monuments, and texts. Surely the study of such an unusual heritage ought not to be eclipsed by subjects of greater

<sup>15</sup> Karl H. Dannenfeldt, "The Pseudo-Zoroastrian Oracles in the Renaissance," *Studies in the Renaissance*, Vol. 4, 1957, pp. 20-21. I am greatly indebted for this reference to my colleague Christina Maranci, Professor of Art History at Tufts University, Medford, MA.

<sup>16</sup> See Julius von Schlosser, "Giusto's Fresken in Padua und die Vorläufer der Stanza della Segnatura," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, Bd. 17, Vienna, 1896, p. 37 and esp. Tafel IV (of the Ambrasian codex, fol. 3r); on "Mahumet", see p. 21. I express my deepest thanks to three Harvard colleagues for their help in finding this rare publication: Lukas Klic (Berenson Library, I Tatti), Kenneth Peterson (Widener Library), and Emily Weirich (Fine Arts Library).

topical practicality, whose value may prove to have been ephemeral. I come to this study, too, quite specifically and unapologetically as an Armenologist— representing, that is, the ancient and continuous testimony of a people that, unique among the Christians of the Near East, have never surrendered any salient aspect of their identity, their sovereign right to be themselves, claiming their native land, pursuing their political aspirations, preserving their language and script, and defending their faith. The Armenian perspective, even in the consideration of so seemingly distant a topic as the image of Zoroaster, is valuable, and students of antiquity, particularly Iranists, ignore it to their own detriment. The river that flows through the Armenian capital, Erevan, is called the Hrazdan: it takes its name from Frāzdānu, the river on whose banks Zarathustra converted king Vishtaspa to his new religion. No other city, neither the one through which the Thames flows, nor the one above the mighty Hudson, can boast such a mark of hoary nobility. In an appendix I would then adduce some further Armenian evidence to approach questions concerning the iconography of the Sasanian reliefs that have come up in this discussion.

#### APPENDIX.

A stone capital from K'asał of the fifth or sixth century shows the Armenian king Tiridates the Great, the first royal convert to Christianity, holding a staff in his right hand and a ring in his left; the ring ought to remind one of the one bestowed upon the Sasanian kings of the period, and its survival in early Christian Armenia suggests the durability of certain religious emblems of royalty.<sup>17</sup> (Plate 24) It does not, however, bear an inscription. The medieval Armenian cemeteries of Julfa in Nakhichevan and of various sites in Arc'ax (Mountainous Karabagh) have numerous tombstones depicting in bas-relief the activities and pleasures of the noblemen who rest beneath them. They depict hunting and feasting and riding on horseback. No other mode of transport for a nobleman was imaginable, and the ancient belief that one's faithful mount bears one to the otherworld endures amongst the Iranians of Armenia— the Yezidi Kurds. So important was the equine image that such funerary monuments are called *jiak'ar*, "horse stones". The Armenian tombs have been compared sometimes to the massive grave monuments of Bogomil princes of the same period in Bosnia; and there is abundant evidence to suggest that Armenian sectarians of the Byzantine period, resettled in the Balkans, brought their beliefs and culture to enrich the homelands of the Southern Slavs. In the Kievan period, the Iranian-flavored art of the bas-reliefs of the Armenian Church of the Holy Cross on Ałt'amar island in Van seems strongly to have influenced the bas-reliefs of the churches of Rus', at Vladimir and other sites.<sup>18</sup> One Armenian tombstone from Gndevank' bears this epitaph: *Ays ē hangist paron Avak'in, or karčawrawk' etav, ēar andaram psakn... t'v. RZZ* "This is the resting [place] of lord Awag, whose days were short; he took the

<sup>17</sup> See J.R. Russell, "The Scepter of Tiridates," *Le Muséon* 114.1-2, 2001 (repr. in J.R. Russell, *Armenian and Iranian Studies*, op. cit.), pp. 187 and 212 plate 1.

<sup>18</sup> See J.R. Russell, "Iranians, Armenians, Prince Igor, and the Lightness of Pushkin," *Iran and the Caucasus* (forthcoming 2013).

unwithering diadem in (AD 1567).”<sup>19</sup> (Plate 25) The relief depicts a man holding in his right hand the reins of a saddled horse; in his left, he has a round, ring-like object. To his left a hunter aims an arrow at a fleeing mountain goat. The reference to the diadem (l-w *psak*; see above), though of course a standard Christian formula, still may explain what the sculptor meant the ring-like object to be. A funerary inscription of 1318 from Noravank’ reads, *Getahrašn Puṭṭayin, or eritasard hasaki yet yolov k’aj mrc’manc’ tigaxoc’eal zant’aramn ankalaw zpsak* “Of Puṭṭay of wondrous beauty, who at a young age after many brave tournaments was pierced through by a javelin and received the unwithering diadem.”<sup>20</sup> The tombstone of *melik’* Mirjan from Binakot’, AD 1551, shows a man standing on a prostrate figure: he holds the Cross in his right hand and a ring-like object in his left.<sup>21</sup> (Plate 26) Although a scholar who has discussed this image believes the fallen man to be a revered ancestor; and the ring, a wine cup viewed from above— it seems more likely that this funerary scene celebrates the nobleman’s defeat of an enemy and his triumphant reception in Heaven with Cross and diadem; it would then be a remote echo of the Sasanian reliefs, such as the ones at Naqš-e Rostam and Tāq-e Bostān. A tombstone from Šōš in Arc’ax (Plate 27), possibly of the noble *melik’* Šahnazarean clan and ca. 17<sup>th</sup> cent., depicts horsemen flourishing aloft rings that even trail ribbons behind them in pure Sasanian style, though their weapons are more up to date— a rifle is neatly carved nearby.<sup>22</sup> We may propose that those rings are diadems, that the hard data of Armenian texts have silenced mere supposition. We may propose that these scenes take place, not at court, but in the next world. To return to the relief. There are amphorae of wine and a feast is about to begin. A seated *gusan* (“bard, minstrel”, a well-known Parthian loan in Armenian) indicates that their glorious, diademed entry into the *gerezman* is to be taken quite literally. For that Armenian word for the tomb (heaven is *draxt*, a forest of trees) is a form of *garō dāmāna*, “house of song”, a designation of the otherworld of the righteous coined by Zarathustra himself. Zarathustra, the singer of the *Gathas*, the bringer of the mighty covenant, not the “Superman” yet the most godlike of men whose image seems settled amongst his followers as that of the Mithra, most manlike of the gods, whose name in Persian, Mihr, has come to mean friendship, love, and light. Mihr lives still in Armenia as a certain hero in a cave, Mher. But that story is for another occasion; and our present study is ended.

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2. Nemrut Dagħ, Commagene: *Syndexios* of Mithras and Antiochus. J.R. Russell provides scale.
3. *Idem*, without author.

<sup>19</sup> Hamlet Petrosyan, “‘*Manuk’ kerparə uš miṣnadaryan hay tapanak’arayin k’andakum (XV-XVIII darer)*” [“The image of the ‘lad’ in late medieval Armenian funerary reliefs”], S.B. Harut’yunyan and A.A. K’alant’aryan, eds., *T’ux Manuk: nstašrjani nyut’er* [“The Dark Lad: conference papers”], Erevan: Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Armenian Academy of Sciences, 2001, p. 74 and plate 2.

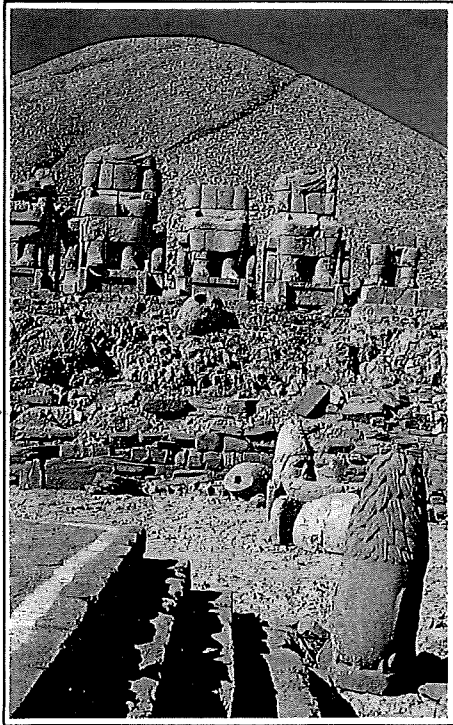
<sup>20</sup> Petrosyan, p. 45.

<sup>21</sup> Petrosyan, p. 77 and p. 78 plate 3.

<sup>22</sup> Russell, “The Scepter of Tiridates,” *op. cit.*, pp. 194-195 and p. 214 plate 3.

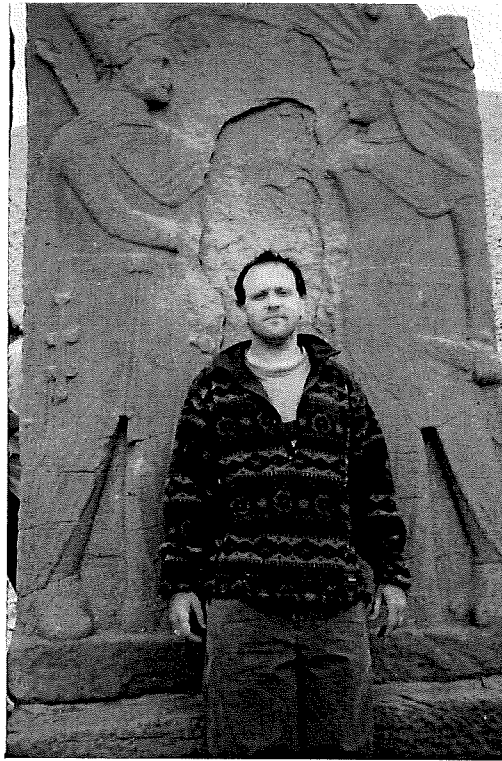


4. Mithra, Arsameia on the Nymphaios, Commagene.
5. Naqš-e Rostam, Sasanian relief of Ohrmazd and Ardašīr I.
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21. Raphael, "The School of Athens".
22. "The School of Athens", details.
23. Giusto of Padua's Zoroaster, Ambrasian codex, fol. 3r.
24. Tiridates on a capital from K'asaṭ.
25. Gndevank' tombstone.
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27. Tombstone from Šōš, Arc'ax.



Nemrut, East Terrace

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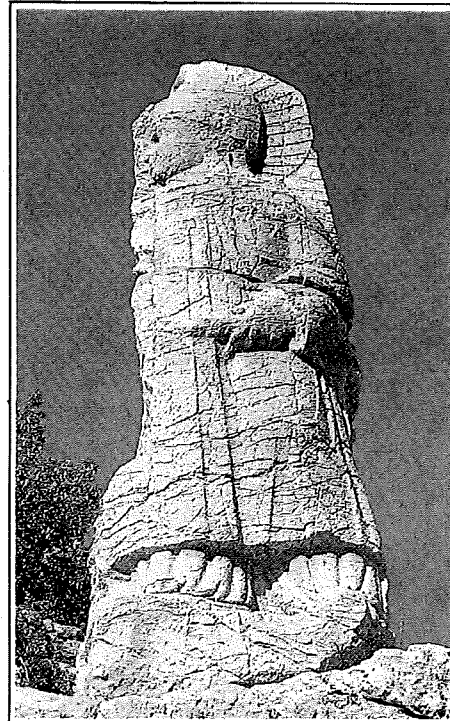


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Nemrut, West Terrace, Antiochos I and Apollon-Mithras

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Arsameia on the Nymphaios, Mithra

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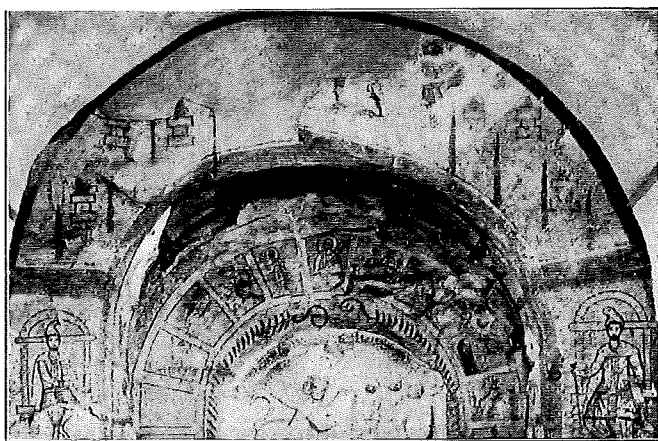
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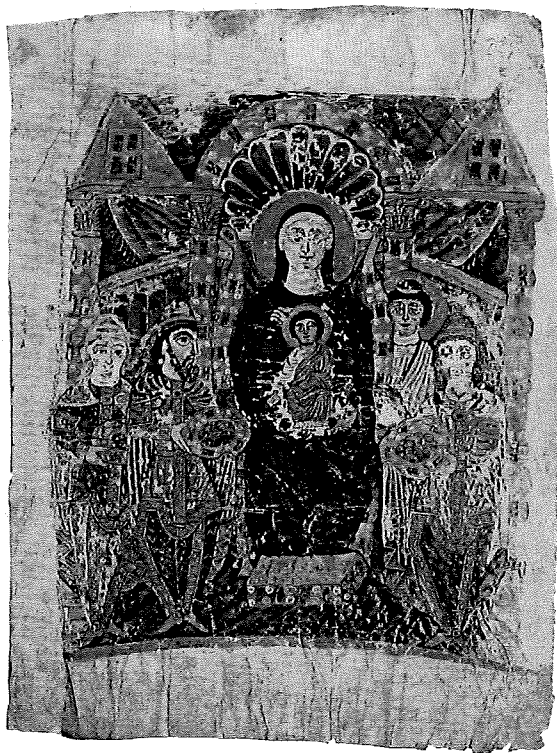
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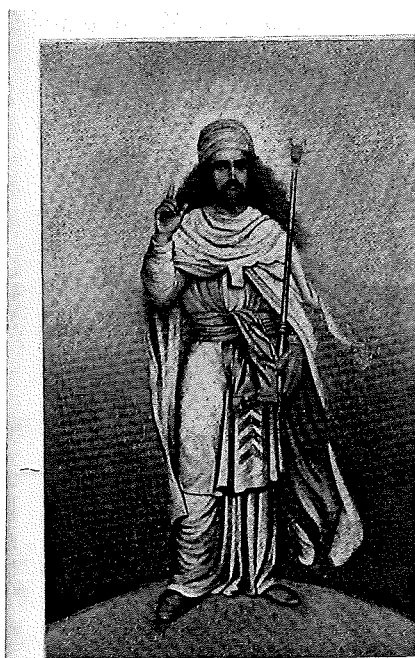
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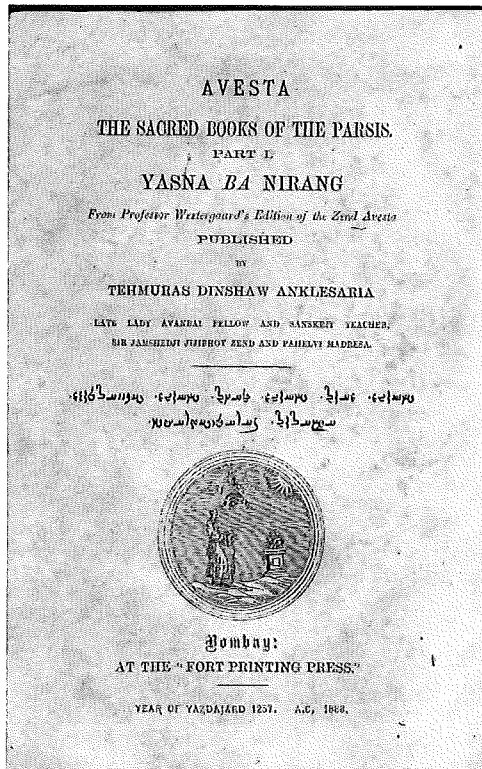
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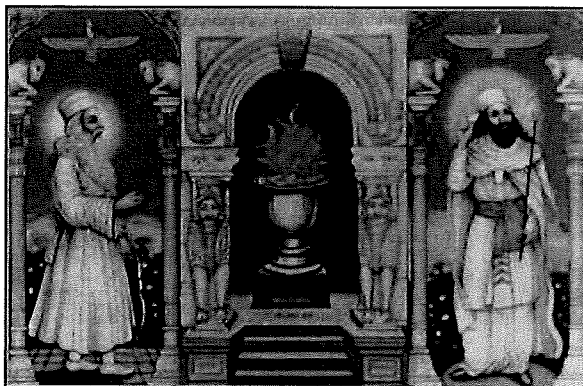
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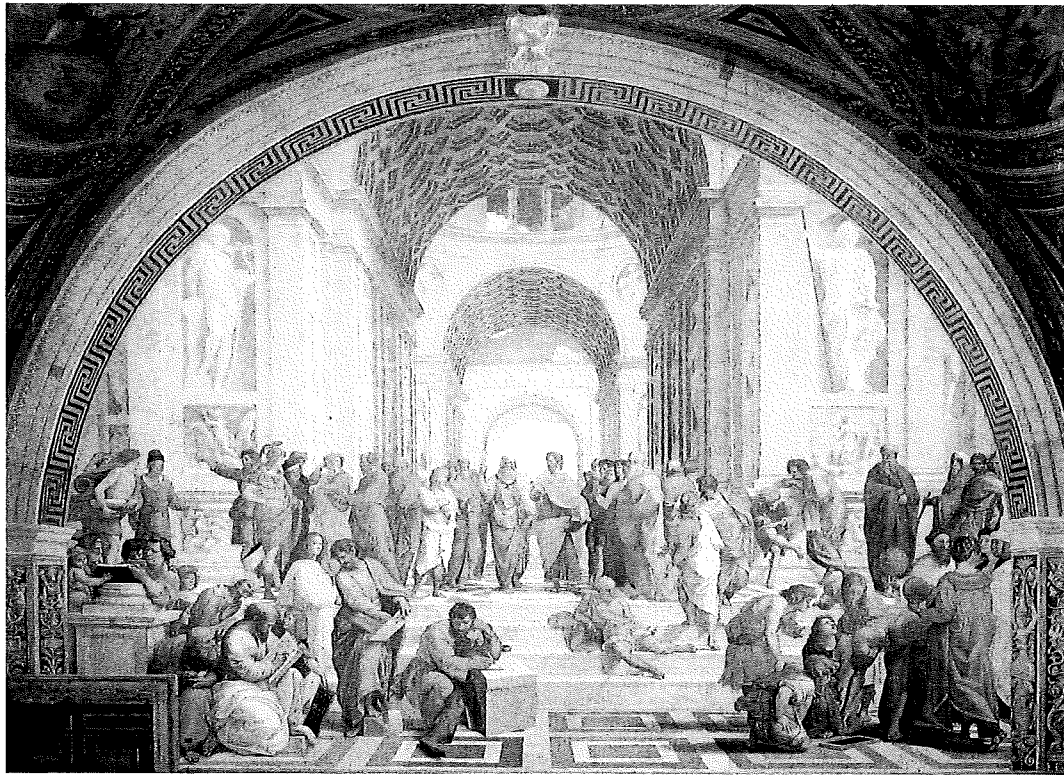
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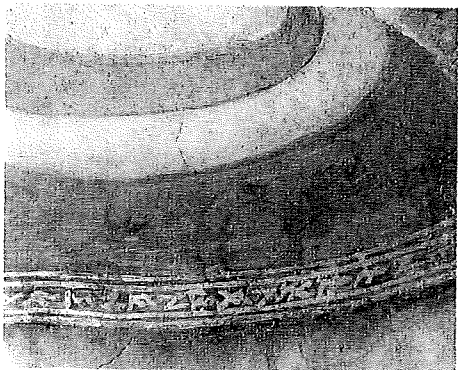
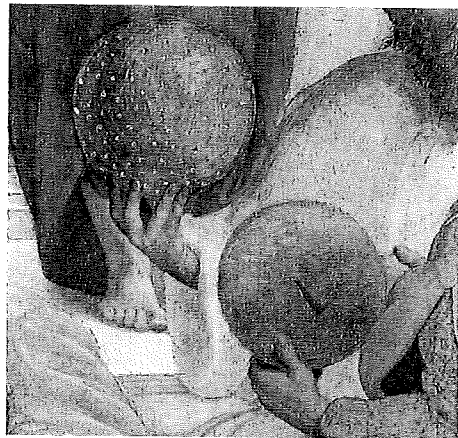
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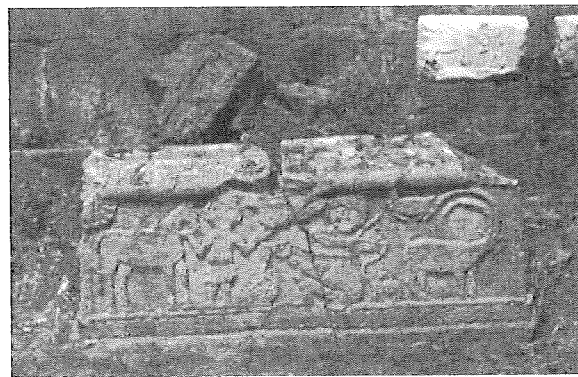




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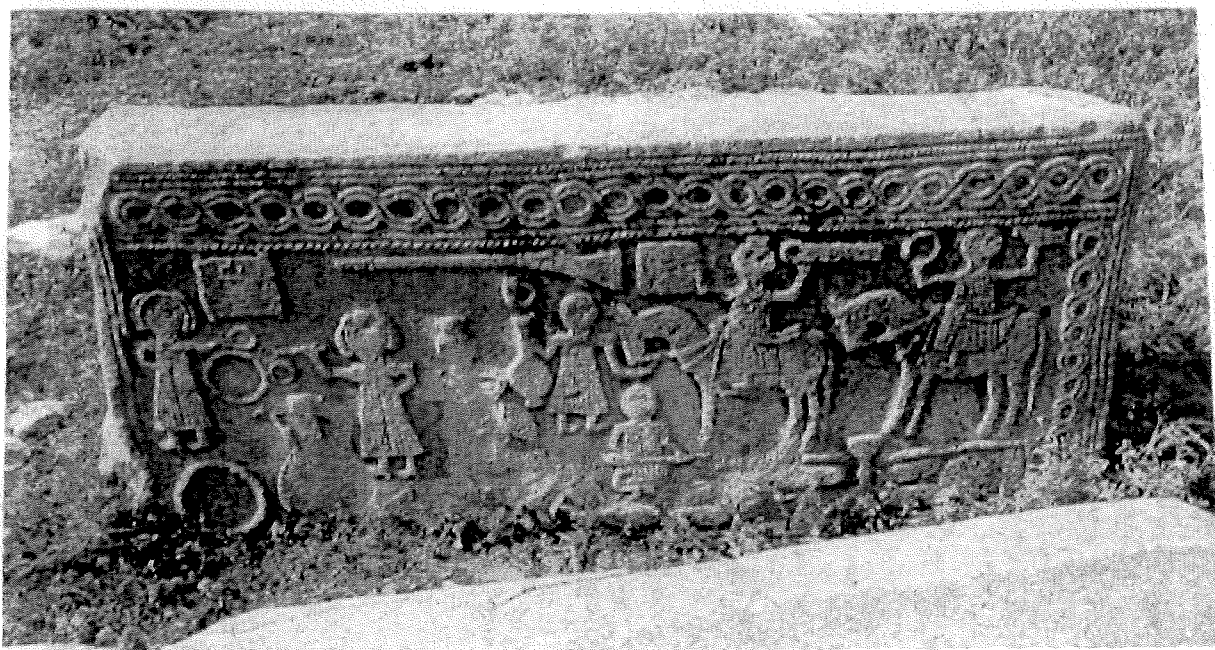
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